



# Montgomery County Council

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**For Immediate Release**

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**September 6, 2005**

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## **COUNCIL APPROVES MEASURE TO “PARTNER” WITH GULF COMMUNITY HIT BY HURRICANE KATRINA**

The Montgomery County Council today acted to “partner” with a local community on the Gulf of Mexico hard hit by Hurricane Katrina.

The Council action is in addition to the dozens of Urban Search & Rescue unit and other County Fire & Rescue personnel who have worked on the ground in Hancock County, Mississippi and elsewhere. The Montgomery County Public Schools is ready to receive children and young people from families displaced by the crisis. Montgomery College is prepared to assist students who wish to enroll there. The County is involved in supporting the Red Cross regional shelter project at the DC Armory. Thousands of County residents have already donated to hurricane relief. The County has established a telephone hotline – 240-777-2600 – for residents who want information on how to help.

A convoy of 20 vehicles and 75 Fire & Rescue personnel will arrive today in New Orleans in request to an urgent appeal from the New Orleans Fire Chief for relief of New Orleans firefighters who have worked for a week without a break.

“I have never been more embarrassed by the actions – or lack of same – of my federal government over the past week, and never been more proud of local governments’ efforts, including our own,” said Council President Tom Perez.

“We will continue to reach out this week to local officials in the Gulf to partner Montgomery County with a local jurisdiction there. We want to do all we can as a government to help those in need – both in the short-term and beyond.”

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*Resolution attached.*

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COUNTY COUNCIL  
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

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By: County Council

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Subject: County Support for Recovery from Hurricane Katrina

Background

1. Daily reports from southern Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama confirm that communities there have experienced one of the greatest natural disasters in the nation's history. The human suffering, measured in loss of life, homes, workplaces, and basic services, is massive and continuing. Nearly a million residents of New Orleans, Biloxi, Gulfport, and other communities are refugees. Restoration of those communities will take months and years, and for some communities may not be possible at all.
2. In past disasters at home and abroad, resources from Montgomery County have been a vital part of the national response. For example, in 1989 the County deployed public safety and other personnel to help the City of Charleston, South Carolina recover from the devastation of Hurricane Hugo, and Montgomery County Public Schools helped to re-equip a Charleston school that had been badly damaged. In 1992 the County mobilized to assist victims of Hurricane Andrew in Florida.
3. In the current disaster as well, resources from Montgomery County have played a vital role. County residents have contributed generously to disaster relief organizations. A 34-member group from the County's nationally recognized Urban Search and Rescue Team (USAR) has been assisting victims in Waveland, Mississippi, and another 11 Fire and Rescue personnel are also on the ground in Mississippi. Additional fire and rescue personnel, as well as equipment and apparatus, have been deployed to New Orleans, and the County's second USAR team is awaiting deployment orders from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Montgomery County Public Schools is expediting admission of children whose families have taken refuge in the County with family or friends. Other County agencies are determining ways to provide similar assistance.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

The Council commends County residents and County personnel, in our Fire and Rescue Service and other agencies, for the great contributions they have made, and continue to make, to help Gulf Coast communities recover from the devastation of Hurricane Katrina.

To build on these efforts, the Council, working closely with the County Executive, County agencies, State and Federal agencies, and community organizations, intends to identify a Gulf Coast community whose leaders wish to establish a partnership with the County to assist in its long-term recovery.